

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 HA-05 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15  
SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 H-01  
L-03 /055 W  
-----125742 261455Z /47

O 261414Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2252  
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD  
USICA WASHDC

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SECSTATE FOR EUR/SOV, PA

E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: CSCE, SOPN, UR  
SUBJECT: EMBASSY REPRESENTATION ON HARASSMENT OF AMERICAN  
NEWSMEN

1. FOLLOWING IS RECONSTRUCTED TEXT OF MESSAGE WHICH WAS  
TO HAVE BEEN SENT AFTERNOON OF MAY 25 BUT APPARENTLY WAS  
NOT TRANSMITTED. BY NOW ADDRESSEES UNDOUBTEDLY HAVE SEEN  
WIRE SERVICE ACCOUNTS WHICH SHOULD HAVE FOLLOWED RATHER  
THAN PRECEDED DEPARTMENT'S RECEIPT OF THIS CABLE.

2. BEGIN TEXT: IN WAKE OF RECENT INCIDENTS OF PHYSICAL  
MANHANDLING, CONFISCATION OF FILM, AND OTHER HARASSMENT  
ENCOUNTERED BY AMERICAN CORRESPONDENTS ATTEMPTING TO  
COVER (A) ORLOV TRIAL, (B) DEMONSTRATION BY FEMALE  
REFUSENIKS IN ALEKSANDROVSKIY GARDEN MAY 23, AND (C)  
HOSTAGE-TAKING EPISODE AT FINNAIR OFFICE MAY 24, EMBASSY  
PRESS ATTACHE CALLED ON MFA PRESS DIVISION COUNSELOR  
ZHURAVLEV AT 14:00 LOCAL TIME MAY 25 TO MAKE ORAL  
REPRESENTATION.

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3. PRESS ATTACHE TOLD ZHURAVLEV OF EMBASSY'S "INCREASING  
CONCERN AND ALARM" OVER INCIDENTS, WHICH HE TERMED  
"UNACCEPTABLE". PARTICULARLY OMINOUS, IN EMBASSY'S VIEW,  
WAS INCREASING REGULARITY OF SUCH HARASSMENT WITHIN PAST  
WEEK TO TEN DAYS. EMBOFF RAN DOWN LIST OF SPECIFIC  
PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY U.S. NEWSMEN, INCLUDING JOSTLING,

CONFISCATION OF AND/OR EXPOSURE OF FILM, FAILURE OF PRESUMED PLAINCLOTHES MILITIA/KGB PERSONNEL TO PROPERLY IDENTIFY THEMSELVES, OSTENTATIOUS FILMING OR VIDEOTAPING OF CORRESPONDENTS BY REPRESENTATIVES OF "ORGANS OF AUTHORITY", AND RECKLESS ACTIONS BY SOVIET AUTOMOBILES IN CUTTING OFF CORRESPONDENTS' CARS OR PLAYING BUMPER-TAG, THUS ENDANGERING LIFE AND LIMB OF OCCUPANTS. PRESS ATTACHE CALLED SUCH ACTIVITY "CRUDE" AND SAID THAT INESCAPABLE CONCLUSION WAS THAT SOVIETS WERE ATTEMPTING TO INSTITUTE DELIBERATE CAMPAIGN TO INTIMIDATE CORRESPONDENTS FROM PURSUING THEIR NORMAL PROFESSIONAL CONCERNS AND TO CREATE AN "ATMOSPHERE OF ARBITRARINESS." SUCH SOVIET CONDUCT WAS CLEARLY NOT IN KEEPING WITH COMMITMENT UNDERTAKEN BY SIGNING HELSINKI FINAL ACT TO FACILITATE BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS FOR FOREIGN JOURNALISTS. IN CONTRAST, SOVIET NEWSMEN IN U.S. WERE NOT SUBJECT TO SUCH OFFENSIVE TREATMENT, IT WAS POINTED OUT, BUT IF PROBLEMS DID OCCUR AMERICAN SIDE QUICKLY AND HONESTLY STOVE TO SET MATTERS RIGHT. THEREFORE, SAID PRESS ATTACHE, EMBASSY REQUESTED MFA TO TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO PREVENT REOCCURANCE OF SUCH "CHILDISH" HARASSMENT.

4. IN INFORMAL DISCUSSION WHICH FOLLOWED, EMBOFF POINTED OUT TO ZHURAVLEV THAT SOVIETS SEEMED DETERMINED TO MAKE PROBLEMS FOR THEMSELVES AND GENERATE UNFAVORABLE PUBLICITY ABROAD. IT WAS NOTED THAT SOVIET PLUG-PULLING DURING LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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APRIL 19-23 SECVISIT HAD NOT PREVENTED AP, UPI AND CBS FROM GETTING FILM OF MCCLELLAN DEMONSTRATION OUT TO WEST WHERE IT WAS WIDELY PUBLICIZED. ALL SOVIETS HAD MANAGED TO DO, NOTED PRESS ATTACHE, WAS GENERATE TWO OFFICIAL U.S. PROTESTS AND REAMS OF BAD PRESS. ZHURAVLEV WAS ASSURED THAT, AS WAS AMPLY DEMONSTRATED DURING SECVISIT, HIGHEST LEVELS OF DEPARTMENT WERE LEGITIMATELY AND GENUINELY CONCERNED ABOUT TREATMENT OF JOURNALISTS AND THAT DIFFICULTIES SUCH AS HAD BEEN EXPERIENCED DURING PRECEDING WEEK SIMPLY CREATED UNNECESSARY PROBLEMS FOR EVERYONE CONCERNED. EMBASSY WAS TRYING TO GET POINT ACROSS IN THIS ORAL MANNER SO THAT SOVIETS WOULD CORRECT SITUATION AND NOT BE RECIPIENTS OF MORE FORMAL PROTESTS ON THIS SUBJECT.

5. ZHURAVLEV EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR LOW-KEY AND FRANK PRESENTATION AND SAID THAT, IN ABSENCE OF ANY WRITTEN STATEMENT FROM EMBASSY, HE WOULD UNDERTAKE TO CONVEY SUBSTANCE OF REPRESENTATION TO APPROPRIATE OFFICIALS (HE TOOK COPIOUS NOTES THROUGHOUT). HE SAID AMERICAN SIDE SHOULD NOT THINK SOVIETS WERE "REASSESSING" THEIR COMMITMENT UNDER THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND INSTEAD HE

INSISTED THAT SOVIET UNION "IN THE INTEREST OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING" WAS DETERMINED TO TAKE CONCRETE ACTION TO IMPROVE JOURNALISTS' WORKING CONDITIONS. HE THEN RECITED FAMILIAR LIST OF MEASURES ADOPTED BY SOVIETS SINCE 1975 TO ACHIEVE THIS END (MULTIPLE EXIT-ENTRY VISAS, MORE GROUP TOURS, ETC.). ZHURAVLEV INFORMED THAT MFA WOULD "STUDY" EMBASSY'S COMPLAINT. HE ADDED THAT SOVIET MILITIA WAS NOT AS WELL TRAINED IN HOW TO DEAL WITH NEWSMEN AS U.S. POLICE, AND HE COMMENTED THAT "SOMETIMES I THINK SOME OF OUR MILITIAMEN ARE NOT VERY WELL EDUCATED." PRESS ATTACHE ENCOURAGED HIM TO BEGIN EDUCATION PROCESS.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PA-01 HA-05 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15  
SSO-00 INRE-00 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 H-01  
L-03 /055 W

-----125760 261455Z /47

O 261414Z MAY 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2253  
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD  
USICA WASHDC

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6. FYI, WE KNOW OF THREE U.S. CORRESPONDENTS WHO HAVE WRITTEN THEIR OWN PROTESTS TO MFA/PRESS - KLOSE OF WASHINGTON POST, FISHER OF L.A. TIMES, AND REDMONT OF CBS - AND OTHERS INDICATED THEY MIGHT FOLLOW SUIT, ALTHOUGH THEIR ARDOR SEEMS TO HAVE COOLED A BIT OVER THE PAST FEW DAYS. ZHURAVLEV ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THESE PROTEST LETTERS HAD BEEN RECEIVED AND "NOTED". WE UNDERSTAND THAT SEVERAL BRITISH NEWSMEN HAVE ALSO PENNED THEIR OWN LETTERS TO MFA/PRESS, AND WE HAVE BEEN IN REGULAR CONTACT WITH BRITISH PRESS OFFICER TO CONSIDER BEST WAY TO MAKE OUR COMMON CONCERNS KNOWN. INCIDENTS ON MAY 23 AND 24 PROMPTED US TO ACT IMMEDIATELY AND BRITISH WERE SO ADVISED. WE ANTICIPATE BRITISH WILL MAKE SIMILAR REPRESENTATION WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS. END TEXT. MATLOCK

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## Message Attributes

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**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** HARASSMENT, TEXT, JOURNALISTS, DIPLOMATIC PROTESTS  
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**Draft Date:** 26 may 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
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**Review Markings:**  
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20 Mar 2014  
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